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NO. 1.

ADDRESS OF GOV. YANCEY.

ON THE
CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY.
DELIVERED AT WILKESBORO, N. C., FEB. 22, 1864.
(A SHORT HAND REPORT, BY G. CLINTON STEEDMAN.)

FELLOW CITIZENS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—I do not know how it is possible for me to make myself heard by this large audience, unless I adopt the plan of the one armed soldier who could not hug his sweetheart all the way around, and so was forced to chalk the distance he could reach on one side, and then turn and hug as far on the other. (Laughter.) It is scarcely possible for me to tell you, fellow citizens, what my feelings are on once more visiting the people of Wilkes county. I well remember, and perhaps some of you do likewise, the first time I ever made my appearance before you. In the summer of '58, a stranger, a boy in years and experience came among you seeking one of the highest offices within your gift; having nothing in the world to recommend him—yet having never heard of his name before. Yet I was so fortunate in making a favorable impression upon you, that you took me up, and from that day to this have never failed to heap honors upon my head. I would be worse than ungrateful, especially when I have this vast assembly to-day a witness to the fact that I am still remembered by the people of Wilkes county, if I were not devoted to your interest—may, if I were not willing to lay down my life for you. May God bless you, fellow citizens, for your kindness to me. It affords me great pleasure indeed to meet so large an assembly from this and adjoining counties. I rejoice to know that even in the midst of a great and desolating war, the people, in such large numbers can yet leave their homes and business to listen to one speak upon the condition of their public affairs, aside from the gratification which proceeds from a recognition of the personal compliment you pay me, as expressed by the larger audience which honors me with its presence and attention. I shall endeavor to justify both the public interest you display and the compliment you bestow, by to-day doing something which is very rare in a politician—by telling the truth.

Why have you, my fellow-citizens, invited me to speak to you on this natal day of the great Washington? What is it you want? Of course you desire to hear about the condition of the country. Of course you want the plain, unadorned, undisguised facts; not that which would be most pleasing to you, but that which is true. You would be unable to find a demagogue who could comply with this requirement, because with him the habit of telling the people that which flatters their vanity, and carefully avoiding any painful truth which might shock their tender sensitivities, has grown into a second nature from which we may anticipate no substantial food for the body politic, such as these trying times imperatively demand. In an hour like this, and on such an occasion as the present, especially is it of the most profound importance that no considerations should influence, save those affecting your deepest and most lasting interests. I am not so hypocritical as to boast that in all my past career I have never once talked "soft nonsense" to the "dear people." On the contrary, I am free to confess that otherwise I would not have been such a successful suitor for political favors. (Laughter.) But I flatter myself I have preserved enough honor and candor to prevent me, when so urgent a necessity requires it, from telling that which is most pleasant in preference to that which is most true, and from trifling with the destinies of my country. I esteem myself very fortunate in having saved so much as this from the breakers where so many craft go to pieces in the yeast of party politics. Indeed I may say I am as lucky as Paddy McGuire, an old acquaintance of my friend, Judge H—, who, in reply to the friendly inquiry of the lawyer how he got on, exclaimed, "Well, may I please your honor, I've bin upon yer State doctick, an' bin drunk, an' got a floggin' in the whippin' post, since ye was here; but thanks be to the Virgin, amid all me wickedness and raskality I've preserved me religin' intire." (Laughter.) And so amid all my political shortcomings I have preserved honesty enough, I hope, to tell you what I conceive to be true about the condition of the country, the aspect of its civil and military affairs, the prospects of the future, and the duties that devolve upon us in the accomplishment of the work before us.

A people who have been afflicted as you have been afflicted; a people who suffer as you suffer; a people whose gallant boys have been slaughtered as your sons have fallen on the battle field; whose darlings now languish in Northern prisons; whose husbands are wasting in far distant camps weary months of listless idleness, while the weeds choke the scanty harvest, and the children pine for the presence and support of their natural protector; old men, who, in feverish anxiety await intelligence which each succeeding mail may bring of the slaughter of their pride and support of their declining years—all are liable to reach out, with the spirit of a drowning man to grasp any passing straw, which for the moment, may keep their heads above the roaring flood, losing sight meanwhile of the firm, though perhaps distant shore which, with calm, determined and persistent effort, they will assuredly be enabled to attain.

In consequence of this continued suffering which experience had not prepared the people to endure with the fortitude possessed by some nations who have been nurtured to the shock of arms, a certain discontent has pervaded and a funeral gloom hung over the community, engendering, if we credit a wide rumor, throughout the State, a notion that we must have a Convention—that we must secede from the Southern Confederacy; and do our first work over again.

Now permit me to ask you what it was that got you into this scrape? Why, you all know it was the fact of your secession in the first instance. (Applause.) Suppose you were sick of typhoid fever and had been close to death's door; and becoming convalescent, the physician should gravely inform you that the only plan to effect your entire recovery would be to take another spell of the infernal fever? Would you not think him a fool? (Laughter.) Or suppose a surgeon should say to a soldier with a ball in his leg: "My dear fellow, I don't see how it is possible for you to obtain relief unless I call for a musket and put another one in the other leg." That would be curious surgery, would it not? Would a system based on the same principle be less absurd when applied to the healing of the body politic?

Secession was tried after it had been considered for a period of forty years, and the whole country understood it as completely as an abstraction could be understood. What is the result? Why, it has been anything else. It has involved us in a war that has no parallel upon the pages of history. Do you expect to find a remedy by a repetition of the dose that brought you a fever? You will pardon me for a funny illustration of a serious subject, but I am somewhat like the old lady, who, in company with her "old man" used to visit a country store kept by one Major Smith, (as there are no Majors and no Smiths in this section, there is no danger of identifying him.) The Major kept some fine samples of goods in the cellar, to which he treated his customers before displaying his dry goods up stairs; for he knew, as you do, that a man in a certain state of exhilaration imagines he can buy two or three counties, to say nothing of goods and groceries—(Laughter.) And the affable old couple were about the best customers he had. On one occasion, after repeatedly going up and down stairs, they got in such a good humor, that when they started home the Major could barely lift them on the saddle—the old lady behind in good old-fashioned style. She was in ecstasies with the Major. He was "the finest skeeper he ever see in all her town do. Bless that Major, what nice samples he does put up to be sure, and how he sweetens!" Greeting the old man with one hand and jesting with the other, she proceeded to expatiate on the Major's charming qualities, until they came to a branch, and to the opposite bank of which the old man managed to ride,

while the old lady unconsciously slipped off quietly into the stream. The old fellow rode some distance before he discovered he had lost something, and rode back to the stream when he ascertained what it was. There she lay in the branch, flat on her back, and had dammed up the water until it had just begun to run into the corners of her mouth. She imagined she was in the cellar, talking to the Major, and she would say every now and then, "Not any more I thank you Major," not another drop Major, unless it is sweetened. (Continued laughter.) Just so with your humble servant in regard to secession. Not another drop Major, if you please, sweetened or not sweetened. (Laughter and applause.)

Our destinies, my fellow-citizens, have now been cast in another government; and although, as you all know, I regretted to go out of the former government, and was one of the last to lay it down, and did so with the same mournful feelings with which I followed my dear father to the grave I never expected, and do not now expect to see it resurrected. Our Convention, composed of delegates fresh from the people, by the most solemn ties that can bind an honorable people to a cause, have pledged their all to its support. May God aid us in the fulfillment of this obligation in the future as in the past, to the letter. The act was a deliberate expression of public sentiment, though it may have been wrong. The government we selected is ours, as much as we are, our own children. The spirit of patriotism is akin to the love of our offspring which God has implanted in us—the highest love sentiment of humanity. A man should love his home if for nothing else but because it is his, and she who loves him; he should love his wife for the same reason; he should love his country, right or wrong, (when in the midst of clashing events he cannot take time to examine all aspects of the question,) because in its destiny are involved the fate of State, community, home, wife, children, self. But you have no other reason to give for defending it, say you do so because it is your country.

Now, gentlemen, I desire to present to you all the various aspects of this question. You have placed me in a position that enables me to gather from sources of information beyond the reach of the public generally, facts which may be very helpful to a solution of the difficulties and problems which agitate your minds; and if you will only have charity enough to believe that I am honest in what I say, possibly you may, on retiring, be able to quote the passage of scripture: "It was good for me to be here."

Now what is it you desire above all other present earthly good? (Voices—"peace," "peace," "we all want peace.") I know, you do. Everybody wants peace. Peace, blessed peace! Why, then, a man who does not desire peace is unworthy existence. Peace, it is one of the highest and holiest attributes of Deity, so much so, that our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, was called the Prince of Peace. The great Apostle Paul said of the highest character of peace, the peace of God, that "it passeth all understanding." Now if it is so, it is the greatest blessing that God has bestowed upon his people, and it is the first thing that you are to take upon you to return from the battle field and take their position again in the family circle, commerce and agriculture to resume their benighted sway, the sword beaten into the plowshare and industry again to stretch her magic wand over the war beaten fields till they bloom as gardens, I suppose, as reasonable men, you are willing to do what you can to secure this consummation so devoutly wished. Which is the best plan?

A Convention is proposed by some. I have no denunciation to make of those who are moving this question. They are as sound men, no doubt, as I am, as you are as anybody; they are my friends; but I think it is wrong. Suppose you call a Convention without any design that it shall put the State out of the Confederacy. You merely call it with the hope that it may be able to make some proposition for peace, or accomplish some result, in the direction of peace, that the Legislature or the executive are unable to bring about. Suppose you call a Convention for this purpose. You are taking the first step in the first thing that you are to take on taking their seats to swear, on the Holy Evangelists, to support the Constitution of the Confederacy. Now, having done that, we take it for granted that they, as honorable men, will keep that oath. What does that Constitution say? Why, in article I, section 9, it reads as follows: "No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance or confederation. And no State shall give aid or comfort to any State which shall have entered into any such treaty, alliance or confederation, nor shall they give aid or comfort to any State which shall have entered into any such treaty, alliance or confederation, nor shall they give aid or comfort to any State which shall have entered into any such treaty, alliance or confederation."

Well, suppose you go a little further and say you will instruct your delegates to take the State out of the Confederacy, because when it is out it is relieved from the obligation of the Constitution and rests upon a separate and independent basis. Supposing also that it is not your design to join the United States Government again, but only to go out as an independent sovereignty, for the purpose of securing peace to yourself, and possibly effecting the same desirable end for all parties. Well, you pass an ordinance of secession—take another dose of this political horse-bone tea—and nothing I know of is more bitter unless it is a bone-set decoction. (Laughter.) And set it for yourselves. Is that going to give you any relief? Will that restore your health and fidelity to their homes? Will that hush the cry of the orphan and dry the widows tears? Will that fill your land with plenty and prosperity? So far from it, I can assure you, my fellow citizens, it will involve you in a new war, a bloodier conflict than that you now deplore.

"But," you may say, "Mr. Davis and his government will not dare to make war on a seceding State, because the right of secession is recognized in the Constitution of the Confederacy." So it is, my friends; but you see, by that time you have thrown off that Constitution, you have gotten from under its obligations and sworn you would have nothing to do with it. Do you expect the Confederacy to be bound by a document you refuse to recognize as effecting yourselves? Just so soon as you announce to the world that you are a sovereign independent nation, in a matter of course the Confederacy has the right of declaring war against you, for sufficient cause, equally with the right she holds of declaring war against England, France or Holland. This right is inherent in all sovereignties.

But what would Uncle Abraham say to it—that old gentleman whose personal politeness has been the subject of so much remark? (Laughter.) And who, they say, can tell more bad jokes than I can. (Laughter.) How would he receive the intelligence that North Carolina had seceded from the Confederacy and set up for herself. He would put his thumb up to his nose and make certain grations and evolutions with his finger, and say: "Waul ole North Carolina, I'm tarnation glad ter see yer come out of Jeff Davis' little consarn; I sware, but yer don't mean to say yer ain't in the Union again, and under the protection of the best government the world ever saw? Bin fit'n' yer too long to let you sneak out that way." (Continued laughter and applause.)

Why of course if such a proceeding on the part of North Carolina would secure her independence, it would only be necessary for one State to secede at a time, get herself acknowledged, and after all were out, turn round and inform such a Confederacy as pleased them. Old Abraham is fighting us not because we are a part of the Southern Confederacy, but because we are in rebellion to the old Union; and so long as we refuse obedience to him he would continue to fight us. The idea that Lincoln would recognize us or admit his claim to allegiance and obedience, is preposterous. Well, would the Southern Confederacy recognize your independence and make a treaty of peace with you? This is exactly going to the point. If you went out of the Confederacy and declared yourself independent, you would have to announce and acknowledge to the world your position of neutrality toward the other belligerents, or there would be no war. How could you preserve neutrality once announced? The answer is, you could not. You would be forced to choose between the Confederacy and the United States. You would not suppose we would, as a neutral State, permit the government to demand to communicate across our territory to its Southern army. Gen. Lee sends some of his veterans down here, takes possession of the railroads—the body who interferes with him, and you have two wars instead of one! There is another consideration involved: a great portion of the provisions that feed Gen. Lee's army are obtained in North Carolina. As a neutral State, you would not be able to force him to leave them, and as he would be forced to leave them, it would be difficult to force him to leave them. Moreover his troops would say: these fellows have basely abandoned us, left us to our fate, and don't deserve our mercy. Old Abe would send his troops here also, because we would no longer be neutral, and so, if you will pardon the expression, we would catch the devil on all sides.

Suppose the State should tomorrow secede from the Confederacy, what would become of your soldiers in the army? Some would run away and come home, no doubt; but the mass of them who have followed that old battle flag through smoke and fire, to the presence of death, and waved its bloody folds in the air, and in the fields of triumph, and the cheers of victory that thrill an applauding world—do you suppose that they would trample it under foot and crawl upon their bellies and eat dirt in that sort of style? (Great applause.) Who then would you have to defend North Carolina? A few old men and some militia officers.

Suppose, as the last step in your obtaining peace, the Confederacy should take the State out of the Confederacy and put it into the arms of Lincoln. Just so soon as you entered into the old Union and swore to support that government, just so soon would you have imposed your share of the debt, taxes, burthens of the United States. Instead of the Confederate tax collector coming around to collect your Confederate currency, of which it must be confessed there is no great lack in the land, the Federal agent comes to you demanding "green backs" and get to assist in carrying on the war. Instead of getting your sons back to the plow and fireside, they would be drafted and sent into the service of Uncle Sam, to fight alongside of his negro troops in extending the white flag over the South. Now if you really desire anything very desirable about such a peace as that, extend your suppositions into the domains of absurdity, and conceive of the North Carolina soldiers basely deserting their comrades in arms, in obedience to the proclamation of your Governor. You gentlemen, they would not come to fight with their new friends, and would just cross from the Southern to the Northern side of the Rappahannock, and their rifles would be pointed at the bosoms of the brave men who have fought by their sides through the fierce fire of a three years war. Would that give you peace?

To think of these glorious North Carolina Regiments—your handsomeness in the first flush of martial enthusiasm—you know them now undisciplined, though sustained by honor and duty; many of them filled with your sons—these regiments that have followed the Southern Cross over so many fields already made classic by their prowess, a stifling idea of their achievements, and the thought of their desertion to the enemy, would be a hall they be asked to fraternize with the miserable scoundrels who have slaughtered our people, devastated our homes, and even inflicted the crowning outrage which demons from hell pale at, on our mothers and sisters; shall they be asked to join in wretches in desolating the homes of the very men who have saved them from long foreign captivity? I think I can assure you today with all candor and all honesty—as a dying man to dying men—in the presence of God—that any step of this kind will only involve you in a deeper and bloodier war. The calamities of war affect our people to a terrible degree, streams of blood are running down the cheeks of many a poor woman; cries for bread come from many a suffering child. But let us trust that the God of battles who gave to our ancestors through seven long years, a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, will yet lead us into the land where grows the fruitage of liberty, richer than the clusters of Enoch, and through which now the milk and honey of independence and nationality. (Applause.)

I have not, fellow-citizens, enumerated all the consequences which would follow inconsistent action on your part. What would become of the currency should you abandon the cause of the Southern Confederacy. It is bad enough already, but every bank in the State is filled with it, and would be broken and worthless to-morrow, in such an event. Widows, soldier families and orphan children have no other kind of commercial and financial resource to which the present suffering on account of the depreciation of the currency, would be insignificant itself, would overwhelm you. What would become of the gallant soldiers who have been maimed and mutilated in the service—these one-legged and one armed boys, incapacitated for labor? Having once subdued themselves to the enemy, you might see one of them, upon his knees with suffering, his rags fluttering in the breeze, his wasted form supported on crutches, and ask the government for support. The reply would be: "You infamous rebel, have you the impudence to ask support from a government you have been fighting to destroy? No. You will get no pension; but we will tax as heavily as we can your little potato patch to pay for your support." You are well aware that when a man sets out to make a bargain he makes everything just as alluring as he possibly can; he presents his goods in the best possible light, and says the most flattering things to induce you to accept his offer. Well, the same policy pertains to diplomacy. When an ambassador or diplomatist is trying to get another to acquiesce in certain measures, he clothes his proposition in the most plausible language he can, and presents the most advantageous terms he can possibly offer as to induce negotiations. Possibly some of you know men who would do better by a friend than they promised to do, but I do not think the majority of you ever heard of them. Can any of you put your finger on a man who has done more for you than he bargained for? If so hard to find one in the circle of your acquaintance, who in the name of Heaven, can tell of a Yankee who ever gave you more than he bargained for? (Applause.) The difficulty is to make him stand up to his bargain. (Voices—"that's so.")

Now what does Mr. Lincoln promise the State of North Carolina? In what language does he clothe his gracious terms of pardon and amnesty? He says, if one-tenth of the people of any State will take an oath to support what? The Constitution? Nay, take an oath to support his proclamation abolishing slavery, his proclamation inciting the slaves to turn out to burn your homes and murder your families! If you swore to support this, in direct violation of the Constitution, as you would know. Old Abe has perjured himself and he wishes to put you in the same category of villainy. Not only must you swear to support one-tenth of the people of any State who will take an oath to support all the acts of Congress which have been passed, abolishing slavery, confiscating your property, placing you in subjection to one-tenth of the community and publicly executing your glorious Chieftains, and every officer from a Colonel up to Gen. Lee.

When the United States Congress last met, Lincoln was called upon by the pressure of public sentiment, to propose some terms of peace to the rebellion of the South—to advance the greatest inducements that could be possibly proffered to secure their return to the Union; and after long consideration, amid all the pressure of the peace election in the North, and in aid of Congress, the best proposition could be offered, was to support one-tenth of the people of any State who would swear to assist in the confiscation of the property of the remaining nine-tenths, set free their negroes, and hang every man whose bravery has elevated him above a certain rank, every man whom you have seen fit to place in an office. What! Deliver up to the malign influence of an unrestrained and unchecked by fear of retaliation, humanity is livid with horror, the glorious heroes among our sons have followed through so many trying scenes, and who have made for us a record of glory, as representative as history's ample page "rich with the perfume of time" have ever unrolled? (Prolonged applause.)

Let no man say this is a fancy sketch. Do not say old Abe is joking; that he will certainly do better than that. I pledge you my existence he would not do half so well. Do you not see how awful he is even while offering us so little. He would have us to give up every civil war which I saw here to-day to warn you against. He wants to set up a government within the government of North Carolina, composed of one-tenth of her population. Our voting population is about one hundred thousand. They want to set up a government of ten thousand perjured scoundrels who are unworthy to lick the dust off the feet of the poorest soldier in any army; and to support it with the bayonet, and to set the people slaughtering each other. You are not fools enough to fall into that trap. You do not need any warning on that subject, although I have given it.

What is to become of your negroes? There were four millions of them in the Confederacy at the commencement of the war. They are all to be turned loose, and you are to be left to deal with them. Mr. Lincoln offers us. They cannot go to the North. I would almost be willing to send them to Massachusetts. (Laughter.) I think they would elevate the tone of its society very much. Indeed I think every darky sent from this country for robbing hen-roosts and stealing hogs would be a missionary to that depraved and lawless country. (Continued laughter.) But they would not receive them, for they are determined on shutting out anything which might improve their moral condition and thereby disturb their swindling calculations, and they have, in common with every Northern State, passed laws prohibiting free negroes from settling within their limits. Let us see what would be done with these millions of blacks, if we were to take the terms Mr. Lincoln offers us. I will only cite you to one case of which there are hundreds of illustrations all pointing to the same dreadful result. In the little village of Beaufort, South Carolina, situated in the sea island cotton districts, from which the inhabitants were expelled, the land has been recently laid out into lots of twenty acres, and put up for sale. I read the account of the sales as published in the Philadelphia Inquirer. The correspondent says: "The sale commenced on Tuesday and bids far to extend to the space of several days to come. The South Carolina colored man stands a far better chance than the wealthy Wall Street man. The interest exhibited by the colored men in the sales makes them extremely envying, and production of such a competition in the bidding, that some of our Northern auctioneers, who pride themselves on collecting crowds and then exciting them, would be half induced to close their establishments should they witness one of these land sales at Beaufort. Notwithstanding the inducements offered to the white troops, the colored men are the principal buyers. In fact, they are the only ones who are buying. They are buying the land for the purpose of carrying on a small business, and the white man can easily count—the hours given to the task not mentioned. It is said by some that Beaufort is destined to become a second Jamaica. No one can deny that the indications point to a fulfillment of the prophecy. The colored men have been for some time extensive owners of property in the place, and it is believed the result of the sales in progress will give them the entire possession of it. This will certainly change the complexion of that one delightful inland watering place. The houses, as a general thing, bring more than their assessed value. One building, valued at seven hundred and fifty dollars, was knocked off at nine hundred and fifty dollars; another, valued at one thousand dollars, went for twelve hundred dollars."

Your lands confiscated and sold to your own slaves! Now you see what is in store for you. This is but the beginning of what would be the end. If they do this in the green tree, what will they not do in the dry? If they do this at the very moment they have the impudence to proffer you terms of peace, what will they not do when our vast armies are disbanded, when the battle flag is laid low in the dust, and the gallant men who have fought for three years stood as a wall of fire between you and destruction, no longer periodically send a thrill of awe through the enemy who listens for their avenging tread across his fields, but melt away before the unimpeded rush of the greedy conquerors? I tell you my fellow-citizens, if we could consent to this thing we would give the fate of dogs; but we would not even get that, for dogs are allowed to sleep under their master's floor and eat the crumbs that fall from his table. (Cheers.) You would get nothing. (A voice, "kicks.") Yes, you would get kicks, and until you wish you had died a man rather than live to become a dog. (Applause.)

Is there any man so lost to reason as to imagine the only possible way to save his negroes is to make terms of peace with the United States and let them remain in the land and protection of Mr. Lincoln? Why, a more ridiculous proposition it is not within the power of our imagination to conceive, except possibly the lunatic's who proposed to purchase Mount Etna for a powder house. (Laughter.) What would you think as a shepherd, trying on a raw winter evening, to get your little flock into the fold, when accosted by a big hungry wolf, saying on the fence, and licking his chops, with "My dear fellow, go home out of the cold and do let me take care of your flock. I am specially ordained for this particular business, [and although 'tis said a great many have died on my hands within the last year or two,] I will see that nothing hurts them. I do assure you upon the honor of a wolf." I should take you for a very poor shepherd if you confided your property to his tender mercies. (Laughter and applause.) I admit I am credulous, but there are some things I cannot accept, like the old fellow in a certain part of the State, [it is not necessary to indicate the exact locality,] through whose farm the telegraph men were running a line. He went out into the field where they were busy arranging the wires, and kicked up a great fuss about the matter. No such a concern should be set up on his premises. "It was against Scripture." "But what are you again to put it up for?" said he. "To transmit messages and dispatches," was the reply. "What on that little wire?" You can't

fool me." They tried to explain the process. He shook his head. "You may send letters and small bundles, but I'll be d—d if you can send a person." (Laughter.) Now on these wires which old Abe is fixing up for our accommodation, you may get over some little personal efforts into a region of safety, but you cannot make me believe they will bear the weight of your negroes. (Cheers and Laughter.)

There is only one more proposition to consider under this head. It is a favorite idea with a great many, that possibly the old order of things could be restored, that our rights under the Constitution could be guaranteed to us, and everything move on peacefully as before the war.

My friends, there are a great many desirable things, but the question not what may be wished, but what may be obtained, is the one reasonable men should consider. It is desirable to have a lovely wife and plenty of pretty children, but every man can't have them. I tell you most candidly, there is no more possibility of reconstructing the old Union and reinstating things as they were four years ago, than exists for you to gather up the scattered bones of your sons who have fallen in this struggle from one end of the country to the other, reclothe them with flesh, fill their veins with the blood they have so generously shed, and their lungs with the same breath with which they breathed their last prayer for their country's triumph and independence. (Immense applause.)

The old Union was not merely a physical juxtaposition, a Constitutional agreement; it was a moral Union. The cement of confidence was what held it together so long. The tendrils of affection which grew from a common life, the national memories of past glory, wreathed its tall columns with a beauty passing fair. Does this confidence or affection exist now? It has gone forever. It has disappeared beneath the fiery hoofs of war that have trampled our fairfields into desolation. It is lost in the smoke of burning cities, and will be talked of no more by the hearth stones that now are heaped with charred rafters and the cinders of the family altar. The bloody hands that have dug up the bones of our ancestors and searched the sacred dust in their bellies, have buried it where plumed can never sound nor the trump of resurrection awaken it into renewed existence. (Cheers.) It has finally gone, forever, blotted out by the members of the Congress of the United States, who have resolved to carry out their intention of exterminating the people of the South and supplanting them by a better race—God save the mark—a better race!

Can the pious mother pray that her children may be brought to associate with the men who make the Word of God common and of war? Will the son seek to give the brotherhood of peace to the murderer of his father, the destroyer of his land? Not while the faintest spark of manhood glows in his bosom. (Applause.)

There is another aspect of the question to which I wish to call your attention, and one which deserves much attention. I desire you to mark my prediction. There never was a peace in the history of North America until the North and South are independent and distinct nations. There might be a temporary peace; such a peace as you have seen effected by overpowering a giant man, putting manacles upon his limbs and throwing him into a dungeon. Such a peace as exists between the wretches in the bars, scales the walls and strikes terror into the hearts of his enemies when they dream of escape, most secure. You would have such a peace as Ireland has to-day. She has obtained peace again and again, but so clearly has God drawn a distinction between the Poles and the conquerors, that they refuse to mix, and have retained their inherent nationality, though every quarter of a century a demand for it a sacrifice of blood. For while peace would reign in Warsaw, but some act of oppression—the whipping of delicate ladies on the bare back in the public streets, for instance, would cause the people to boil over in a fresh ebullition of indignation, and a torrent of blood to flow until "peace" was again restored. Just so with Ireland. It did not, like Scotland, hold out to the conqueror, but obtained "peace," and ever since, one of the noblest races on the face of the earth has been engaged, except when fighting their oppressors, in fattening sucking pigs for the delicate palate of their foreign masters, whilst their children cried for bread; and at length their magnificent country is being depopulated by the policy of the enlightened conquerors who find that sheep are more valuable than men. Like the Yankees, they propose to supply "better race." Do you suppose the chivalrous people of the South, whose distinct moral nationality has long since been recognized, would submit to see all their proud cities garrisoned with negro soldiers; to see the lands of their friends divided up and parcelled out among the foreign mercenaries? Do you suppose the blood of the Southern youth would run quietly in their veins when he saw a negro officer walking the streets and making his sister give way for him, or insulting her by a very presence? Do you suppose this kind of peace would long endure? No, insurrection after insurrection, revolution upon revolution, war after war would burst upon the country, and for year after year, century after century, as in European States, victims would be demanded and blood flow in torrents, and a war which a drop would have at first won independence and permanent peace. The only way to obtain continued peace—and I want no other—is to fight it out now. (Applause.) To fight it out now, whilst we have a government, and great and glorious armies in the field. If we do not, we will leave war as an inheritance to our children's children. We will leave this terrible question for our little boys to settle when we have passed away, and under circumstances far different and advantages far less than we now possess for asserting their rights, their race and nationality.

If you think, fellow citizens, as a great many of you do, that proper efforts have not been made during this warfare, to obtain the peace which you desire, why, there cannot be any earthly objection to such efforts being made. I have been in favor of them myself, and from time to time so advised the President. If you think our government should tender the olive branch of peace and let no occasion pass, why, fellow citizens, as a matter of course, let it be done. But I beg you to recollect that there is a lawful and legal way pointed out by the Constitution of your country, and any effort you make in this way will be right and proper. Other modes of procedure will only place you in a false position and do your country an injury.

No doubt many of you have read the writings of Solomon, and have concluded that Solomon knew a thing or two. I think among the best things he ever said was this: "The Kingdom is a tower of strength." He simply meant that those who had law and order and authority on their side, which in old times was represented by the name of the King, had a moral force against their enemies, and would generally prevail. Therefore remember, in all your individual efforts to obtain relief, that the King, name is a tower of strength, and that if you proceed according to the established authority and order you carry with you this tower of strength, which will accomplish more for you than any revolutionary or ill-conceived plan that could possibly be devised amongst you.

There is another consideration, fellow citizens.—It is exceedingly important, before we take any great step of this sort, that we should base our action upon the right ground: we should not put ourselves in a false position.

Now, if a person should undertake to address a State Convention, what reason would you give to justify a separation from the Southern Confederacy? You hear a great deal said about the tendency of the military authorities to overstep the civil; about the flagrant violations of faith on the part of Confederate Government in conscribing the principals of substitutes, &c. Could you answer to God for the peace you had broken on this ground? You say it is a great outrage. "It may be so," but you pronounce upon a violation of law? Your judges. It is not for you to say, it is not for me to say, it is not for the legislature to say, a Convention cannot

men prescribed by the Constitution; to bear the ill you have like the Jew clerk of Ephesus, not of you "to do nothing rash." To implement no more doubt now about the establishment of the independence of the Southern Confederacy than I have of my existence, provided we remain true to the cause we have solemnly undertaken. Now, I have no more to say than my original act, by the resolutions of her Legislature, by an hundred assurances of the most solemn character. She will dare endure to the bitter end the men who suffer are the men who win. There is nothing which exists in the earth or in the heavens worth having that is not the result of pain and endurance. I have no first lesson of life. I have no base metal we will stand the fiery test. I thank you for the indulgence with which you have attended to my rambling remarks; and I desire only to express the hope and trust that after many months, you may rest under the shade of our national Independence, and have been as free as leafy branches, the white winged dove of peace will tune her soft note to the memory of your loved and lost, who refused to lay down their lives in their alters and to be forgotten.

May God bless you all.

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JOHN DAVIS

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